

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

Claims 1-14 (cancelled)

Claim 15 (previously presented): An isolated DNA encoding a protein having an amino acid sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2.

Claim 16 (cancelled)

Claim 17 (previously submitted): An isolated DNA having a the nucleotide sequence ranging from the 49th to 3,183rd bases in comprising nucleotides 49 to 3,183 of the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 1.

Claim 18-24 (cancelled)

Claim 25 (original) An isolated nucleic acid molecule consisting of the DNA sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1.

Claim 26 (cancelled)

Claim 27 (previously submitted): An isolated nucleic acid molecule consisting of a ~~DNA sequence fully complementary to~~ the complete full length complement of the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1.

Claim 28-31 (cancelled)

Claim 32 (currently submitted): A kit for ~~identifying~~ distinguishing a differentiated chondrocyte from a dedifferentiated chondrocyte comprising ~~at least~~ one of the nucleic acids of claims 15, 17, 25 and 27.

Claim 33-39 (cancelled)

Claim 40 (new): An isolated DNA which hybridizes under stringent conditions with DNA having a nucleotide sequence ranging from the 49th to 3,183rd bases in the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein the stringent conditions comprise a temperature in the range of that from the T_m of a hybrid of completely matching nucleic acids to a temperature 20°C lower than the T_m , and the DNA encodes a protein specifically expressed in differentiated chondrocytes.